

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 are presently active in this case, the Abstract amended, and Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 amended, and Claims 21-22 added by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Launey et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,086,385 to Eriksson et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,346,892 to DeMers.

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Bonshock for the December 12, 2007 personal interview at which time the outstanding issues in this case were discussed. During the interview, Applicants presented amendments and arguments substantially as indicated in this response. While no formal agreement was reached, Examiner Bonshock indicated that the amendments to the independent claims and the addition of Claims 21-22 appear overcome the outstanding rejection, but further search and consideration is needed. Further, as noted in the interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for further discussion if the Examiner feels that such discussion will advance prosecution in this case.

In response to Examiner Bonshock's indication during the December 12th interview that the present application may present a double patenting issue with respect to the claims of co-pending application Serial No. 10/713,224, filed herewith is a Terminal Disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321 in order to prevent a double patenting rejection of the claims of the present application. For the record, Applicants note that the "filing of a Terminal Disclaimer simply serves the statutory function of removing the rejection of double patenting and raises neither a presumption nor estoppel of the rejection."¹

¹ Quad Environmental Technologies Corp. v. Union Sanitary District, 946 F.2d 870, 874, 20 USPQ2d 1392, 1394-5 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Turning now to the merits, in order to expedite issuance of a patent in this case, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 to clarify the patentable distinctions of the present invention over the cited references. Specifically, each of Applicants' independent Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 recites a main menu that includes a first system image showing status information for a first system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems, and a second system image showing status information for a second system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems. In addition, these independent claims recite that a first system menu or second system menu can be displayed on the display screen in response to a user touching the touch sensitive key corresponding to the first or second system, and also in response to the user touching the first system image or second system image. Finally, independent Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 have been amended to recite that at least the first system image is a spatial map of the aircraft cabin showing status information for different locations within the aircraft cabin, and the first system graphical menu is displayable on the display screen when the first system image spatial map is touched by the user.

Thus, as discussed in the December 12, 2007 interview, Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 have been amended to clarify that the spatial map itself is touch sensitive and activates the first system graphical menu when touched by a user. The outstanding Office Action acknowledges that the cited references to Launery et al. and Eriksson et al. do not teach that the first or second image is a spatial map of the aircraft cabin shown status information for different locations in the cabin, but cites the new prior art reference to DeMers as teaching this feature.² As seen in Fig. 1 of DeMers, this reference discloses a display 10 having a central display area and a plurality of alphabetical and numerical buttons provided around a periphery of the central display area. As seen in Fig. 1, the central display area includes a spatial map of an aircraft cabin and various temperatures at different locations in the aircraft

² See outstanding Office Action at p. 6, lines 9-15.

cabin. As seen in Figs. 2-4 of DeMers, the peripheral buttons are pressed by the user in order to activate a pull down menu from which items can be selected. For example, in Fig. 2, the “A” button is pressed to access a pull down menu listing menu options in alphabetical order beginning the letter “A”.

Thus, as discussed in the December 12, 2007 interview, although DeMers discloses a spatial map, this reference does not disclose that the spatial itself is touched in order to access a system menu as now clearly recited in Applicants’ independent claims 1, 7, 12 and 17. The system of DeMers cannot provide the convenient status overview from which the user can identify a system of interest from a single screen and select the system of interest from a submenu containing more detailed information, which is provided by the claimed invention. Therefore, independent Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17, as amended herein, patentably define over the cited references.

In addition, Applicants maintain that the cited references do not disclose a main menu that includes a first system image showing status information for a first system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems, and a second system image showing status information for a second system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems, and first and second system menus displayable on the display screen when the respective image is touched by the user. Figure 4 of Applicants’ specification as originally filed shows an exemplary configuration covered by each of Applicants’ Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17, as amended herein. As seen in this figure, the display screen includes a main menu 10 having five separate system images corresponding to respective systems of the aircraft cabin. Also included on the display is touch sensitive keys 3. As discussed in paragraph [0022] of Applicants’ specification, the main menu 10 provides a general overview of the overall cabin status and includes essential information regarding various cabin systems to allow the desired cabin system to be selected either by touching the touch sensitive keys or by touching the image area of the display screen 2. This provides the

user with a simple interface for both identifying a cabin system of interest based on the status shown in the main menu, and quickly selecting the system of interest. As further shown in Figure 4, the system images of this embodiment are each a spatial map of the aircraft cabin, and several of these spatial maps (Examples 12, 13 and 17) show status information for different locations within the aircraft cabin.

In contrast, the cited reference to Launey et al. discloses an expandable home automation system having various display menu configurations. However, as discussed in the Amendment filed September 20, 2007, Launey et al. discloses status information only for a selected system, and does not display on a single screen status information for first and second systems. The only way a user can get system status information from this arrangement in Launey et al. is by separately accessing the submenus of respective system keys. This does not provide a convenient status overview from which a user can identify a system of interest from a single screen and select the system of interest from a submenu containing more detailed information.

As also discussed in the September 20th amendment, Ericksson et al. discloses a multifunction control device for a vehicle, but the system images provided on the display 22 (such as the temperature and volume settings) cannot be touched by a user in order to activate a submenu associated with these functions. Thus, even if the temperature and volume displays are considered system images, these system images are not touch sensitive in order to activate a submenu as required by Applicants' independent claims.

Finally, as discussed in the December 12th interview, and noted above, the system of DeMers et al. discloses images on the display, and also buttons provided around a periphery of the display, but does not disclose that the submenus can be activated by pressing any image, and also by pressing any button. Thus, the combination of Launey et al., Ericksson et al. and DeMers et al. does not disclose a main menu that includes a first system image

showing status information for a first system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems, and a second system image showing status information for a second system of the plurality of aircraft cabin systems, and first and second system menus displayable on the display screen when the respective image is touched by the user. This provides an additional basis for patentability of Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 over the cited references.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants' independent Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 patentably define over the cited references. As Claims 2-6, 8-11, 13-16 and 18-20 depend from Claims 1, 7, 12 or 17, these dependent claims also patentably define over the cited references. Nevertheless, Applicants' dependent claims provide further patentable distinctions of the invention over the cited references.

Specifically, Applicants' dependent Claims 3, 9, 14 and 19 recite that the main menu is a status menu including three or more system images each showing information for a respective one of said cabin systems. As noted above, Figure 4 of Applicants' specification shows a main menu providing five separate system images having status information for their respective systems. At best, Ericksson et al. discloses only two system images (i.e., a volume setting and temperature setting). Thus, these dependent claims provide a further basis for patentability over the cited references.

Applicants' Claim 6 recites a main menu touch sensitive input key displayed on the display screen, the plurality of touch sensitive input keys and the main menu touch sensitive input key being simultaneously displayed on the display screen when each of the first and second system menus is displayed on the display screen. This feature provides a convenient mechanism whereby a user can either return to a main menu from a submenu, or move directly to a separate submenu without the need to navigate back through the main menu. This feature is provided on every submenu. The cited prior art references also do not disclose

this feature, and thus Claim 6 provides a further basis for patentability over the cited references.

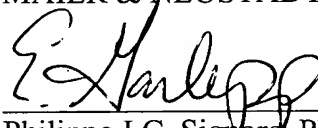
Further, Applicants have added new Claim 21, which recites that the entire user interface is embodied as an adaptable touch sensitive screen without any hardwired input keys. This limitation is supported at least by paragraph [0039] of Applicants' published specification. As noted in this portion of Applicant's specification, the feature of Claims 21 provides for adaptability of the user interface. As discussed in the December 12, 2007 interview, each of the cited references to Launey et al., Eriksson et al. and DeMers disclose a hardwired input key. Therefore, new Claim 21 provides an additional basis for patentability over the cited references.

Finally, Applicants have added new Claim 22 to recite that both the first and second system image is a spatial map of the aircraft cabin showing status information for the respective systems at different locations within the aircraft cabin and the first and second system menus can be displayed by a user touching the respective spatial map. As noted above and discussed in the December 12, 2007 interview, none of the cited references disclose touching a spatial map itself in order to activate a system of menu associated with the spatial map. Therefore, these references also do not disclose first and second spatial maps that can be touched to activate respective system menus as required by Claim 22. Therefore, Claim 22 also provides an additional basis for patentability over the cited references.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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